

Congressman Visits Naval Health Research Center

Naval Health Research Center

Courtesy Story

Date: 03.27.2018

Posted: 03.29.2018 12:26

News ID: 271083

SAN DIEGO – Rep. Scott Peters, from California’s 52nd district, visited the Naval Health Research Center (NHRC) to meet with staff and learn more about the only Department of Defense (DoD) medical research laboratory on the West Coast, March 27.

Peters, a member of the House Committee on Veterans’ Affairs and co-founder and co-chair of the congressional life sciences caucus, toured NHRC’s infectious diseases and warfighter performance labs, talked with scientists about current research, and attended a town hall with staff during the visit.



Designated the DoD deployment health research center since 1999, NHRC is located in Point Loma, just a short distance from a major military medical center, several Marine Corps bases, numerous fleet resources, and a recruit training command, allowing scientists to conduct research that is relevant to the needs of operational forces.

San Diego, as Peters pointed out during his visit, is also a biotech industry hub and home to several academic and medical research institutions. This makes NHRC’s location ideal for forging research partnerships that support innovative solutions to the health threats modern warfighters face.

“All of our research is geared towards improving the health and readiness of our warfighters and their families,” said Capt. Matthew Hebert, NHRC’s executive officer. “Our expertise ranges from protecting our armed forces from infectious disease threats to improving physical and mental health, boosting resilience, and optimizing human performance.”

While touring the warfighter performance laboratory, Peters met with researchers who study sleep and fatigue mitigation, injury prevention and rehabilitation, and environmental physiology to improve the health, survivability, performance, and readiness of military members.

In NHRC’s sleep lab, part of the larger multi-disciplinary warfighter performance lab, Rachel Markwald, Ph.D., sleep research physiologist, spoke with Peters about studies her team is conducting to help reduce the impact of fatigue and improve sleep quality for operational forces. One of the goals of Markwald’s research is finding effective ways to identify fatigue and reducing its impact to keep service members alert and focused while on duty.

In the infectious diseases laboratories at NHRC, researchers talked with Peters about their disease surveillance along California’s U.S.-Mexico border and at military hospitals and clinics. By monitoring service members for disease outbreaks, scientists at NHRC support the health and readiness of active duty members and play a larger role in public health for the civilian community as well.

“Our military is typically a young, healthy, and highly vaccinated population,” said Dr. Kenneth Earhart, chief scientist at NHRC. “Disease outbreaks in this population are concerning and the surveillance conducted by our researchers serves as an early warning system for both the military and civilian communities.”

Peters said the work being done at NHRC to improve health and readiness of service members is important, providing value to the military.

As the DoD’s premier deployment health research center, NHRC’s cutting-edge research and development is used to optimize the operational health and readiness of the nation’s armed forces. In proximity to more than 95,000 active duty service members, world-class universities, and industry partners, NHRC sets the standard in joint ventures, innovation, and translational research.